DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 135 258 FL 008 446

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TITLE Teacher's Guide for Poor Simpleton, MC Format.
INSTITUTION Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13, Lancaster, Pa.
PUB DATE Apr 76
NOTE 39p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bilingual Education; *Cloze Procedure; *English (Second Language); Error Analysis (Language); Item Analysis; *Language Tests; *Multiple Choice Tests; Spanish; Spanish Speaking; Teaching Guides; Test Construction; Testing; Testing Problems; *Test Interpretation; Vocabulary
IDENTIFIERS Elementary Secondary Education Act Title III; ESEA Title III

ABSTRACT

This is a teacher's guide for "Poor Simpleton," a language test designed for students of English in bilingual programs. The guide explains the nature of the test, how to administer and score it, and how to analyze test results. The test is a modified version of the cloze procedure. Unlike most cloze tests, which are "open-ended," that is, there are no constraints on what the student restores to the text in each blank, this particular test offers the students a choice of four words for each blank. The prose passage used for this test is a translation of the Spanish story, "Pobre Inocente." A copy of the test itself is provided. (CFM)

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TEACHER'S GUIDE

for

P O O R S I M P L E T O N[1]

MC FORMAT - APRIL, 1976

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[1]Translated from the original "Pobre Inocente", Leyendas Latinoamericanas, edited by Genevieve Barlow (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1970), pp. 6-12, with permission of the publisher.

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I

ABOUT THE TEST

The test that you are about to use is a most unique sort of measuring device. It has been carefully developed to provide you with reliable and accurate insights into the efficiency of the English-language grammars which underlie the language performance of your students. But that's not precisely what makes this test unique since similar claims are made for many other tests.

What makes this test unique is the fact that it is an exactingly modified version of the cloze procedure, a testing device which has come to command a good deal of respect since its advent some twenty-five years ago. The 'cloze' was first developed by Taylor (1953). It involves the deletion of every nth word (usually every 5th, 6th, or 7th) from a passage of normal prose. The passage thus mutilated is given to the examinee with instructions to restore the deleted words. In this most common format the procedure is known as an 'open-ended' cloze, since there are no constraints on what the examinee restores to the text in each blank save the range of possible choices generated by his grammar of the English language. The accuracy of the range of choices this internalized grammar generates is thought to be directly reflective of his language proficiency.

The test you are about to become acquainted with is an extension of the principles which underlie the open-ended cloze procedure. In fact, it is based on one specific seventh-grade level open-ended cloze developed

and studied during the first year of the project (see Jonz, 1975) which has developed the present instrument. The principal difference between the original procedure and this new one, from your standpoint, is that this new one is in a form that is far easier to administer and score. It is a MULTIPLE-CHOICE test.

In addition to its unique format, this new version is also unique in that it has been specifically designed for use in contexts where students whose dominant language is Spanish are acquiring English as a second language. That is, it was developed especially for Spanish dominant students. This is so because the response possibilities (the 'multiple choices') were selected by virtue of their frequency of occurrence in an administration of the passage to a large group of adolescent native Spanish-speakers (this original test population is described in detail in Jonz, 1975). A recent study (Jonz, 1976) has demonstrated its usefulness across a variety of native language backgrounds.

Briefly, the most frequently occurring acceptable response is identified as the one correct answer on the new test. The other choices (known as 'distractors') are derived by selecting the most frequently occurring unacceptable responses on the earlier administrations of the open-ended version. Please note: the distractors were not selected on the basis of their plausibility nor their attractiveness but rather on (1) their frequency of occurrence, and (2) their unacceptability. This is a clear procedural and philosophical departure from current convention and as such adds to the uniqueness of the test. As a result of this process, native users of English whose literacy skills are at or above the seventh-grade level will attain nearly perfect scores.

One additional note about the development of the new test: it contains only about half as many items as the original open-ended version contained. This alteration produces two major desirable effects. First, the test does not take as long for the student to complete as did the original version. Though you shouldn't time it, you can expect even the slowest of your students to be finished in about 20-25 minutes. Second, the restoration of context which didn't exist physically in the original open-ended version should enhance the opportunity each of your students has of doing his best job. The more specific effects that this restoration has had are reflected in the section of this Guide called 'Understanding and Using the Results'. In that section, formal and contextual constraints on examinee response are detailed for each item of the test.

And now that I've mentioned it, I should go on to say a bit about the very important function of this test that is detailed in the section of this Guide just referred to. Aside from the obvious pre/post assessment application of the test and its usefulness in placement applications, it can also be said to provide individual and group diagnostic information of a very high quality. The section of the Guide called 'Understanding and Using the Results' provides you with some assistance in capitalizing on the wealth of information which a language student reveals through the errors he commits. It does this by detailing some of the constraints on selection that should be in operation for correct selections to be made. By being aware of these constraints, you will be able to best capitalize on strengths which your students have and to profitably deal with weaknesses.

Now that you know a bit about the test, let me turn your attention to some administrative details. After that, we can get down to the

specifics of deriving diagnostic information.

II

HOW TO GIVE AND SCORE THE TEST

Giving the test

It is essential, usually, to have accurate information which identifies each student. The cover page of the test is designed to provide a place to record that information. You will want to insure that each examinee fully completes the cover page. Provide as much help as is required.

Directions for taking the test are provided in each test booklet in both English and Spanish. You'll have to decide which set of directions will be most effective in assuring that all of your students understand what they are expected to do. One would assume that for the majority of the cases, the Spanish-language directions will prove most effective. The test is, after all, primarily designed for non-native users of English whose dominant language is Spanish. If you are employing the test with a group whose strong language is other than Spanish, you will want to provide as much help in their native language as necessary to insure comprehension of directions.

In any event, the directions are designed for you to read aloud to your students while they read them silently. There is a practice exercise midway through the page of directions. It is essential that you spend as much time on this practice exercise as is necessary to insure that each student understands:

(1) that some words have been taken out of an otherwise normal story,

(2) that for each spot where words have been taken out, four choices are offered and that only one of the four choices is the word that was taken out, and

(3) that the whole idea of the exercise is to pick out the one word which was taken out, marking that word with an 'X' in the test booklet.

Don't time the test. It is designed to be easily taken by even the slowest student in well under a half an hour. However, students should be allowed as much time as they need to do their best work.

Be certain that once the nature of the exercise is clear to your students, that you take time to emphasize:

(1) that the first step in doing the exercise is for each student to silently read the story in its entirety (blanks and all) to get the general storyline in mind, and

(2) that if an item is very difficult it should be skipped and returned later, and

(3) that it is not a speeded test. Counsel deliberation rather than speed.

Most students will have no difficulty using the numbering system to match the proper response choices to the proper blank. If you have students who you suspect would have trouble matching numbers, you might want to provide a mechanical aid such as a stiff piece of paper or any other straightedge for those students who wish to use one.

Summary:

(1) READ DIRECTIONS ALOUD. STUDENTS READ ALONG SILENTLY.

(2) DWELL ON PRACTICE EXERCISE UNTIL THE TASK IS CLEAR TO ALL STUDENTS.

(3) DON'T SET A TIME LIMIT ON THE TEST.

(4) ADVISE STUDENTS TO READ THE STORY, BLANKS AND ALL, AT LEAST ONCE BEFORE BEGINNING TO MARK THE CORRECT WORDS.

(5) CAREFUL SELECTION OF APPROPRIATE WORDS IS IMPORTANT. SPEED IS NOT.

(6) STUDENTS SHOULD USE A STRAIGHTEDGE ONLY IF YOU THINK IT WILL HELP THEM MATCH CHOICES WITH THE PROPER BLANK.

Scoring the test

One of the advantages of the multiple-choice format is that it is quite easily and objectively scored. Templates are provided for you to use in arriving at the total number correct (the raw score) which you should record in the appropriate space on the cover page of the test. If the raw score is all that you have need of, your scoring job ends with this step (which should take about one minute). If you would like to take fuller advantage of the wealth of information provided by a more detailed analysis of response patterns, you'll find the next section to be most useful.

III

UNDERSTANDING AND USING THE RESULTS

By using this section of the Guide you will be able to relate test results to classroom activities. Though you would want to use the

results of any formalized testing procedure with the clear understanding that such results cannot be accepted as absolute, you'll nonetheless want to draw on such results as a source of information in making decisions about classroom tactics. One way that you can do that is by using the information provided in this section.

It is generally acknowledged that the results of second language tests can be rich sources of information about the examinees only to the extent that the tests tap real language processes, and to the extent that all sources of influence on test response are properly considered. There is no general agreement, however, about what underlies real language behavior, nor about how that behavior might most accurately be measured, nor about what constitutes an altogether adequate analysis of sources of influence on test response. This section of the Guide will draw your attention to the various sources of influence on test response. It must be left to your judgment, however, whether a cloze procedure adequately measures language proficiency. It is assumed that you will make that judgment within the framework of what you believe it means 'to know a language'. (See Spolsky, 1968 for a good deal of insight into this matter.)

One can organize the influences on test response into two large categories:

(1) Those Things You Can do Something About, and

(2) Those Things You Can't.

The second category includes things that you might like to be aware of such as irrational guessing or the response set which Hofman (1974) and Pike and Hill (1976) point out as a 'compulsion to fill in empty blanks'. This category, in short, probably most heavily reflects the testing method.

You should be aware of its possible influence, but should move forward from there to tackle the other category. It is that category which the remainder of this section will help you deal with.

What this section of the Guide reflects is a belief that responses to the various items on the test (or language behavior, if you will) are made within the framework of both formal and contextual constraints functioning both separately and conjointly. What that means is that if you, as a teacher, are going to figure out what goes into making a correct response (getting the right answer on the test) and upon that basis diagnose what went wrong if a student missed a particular item on the test, you are going to have to consider both formal (traditionally called 'grammatical') rules that apply as well as the context (storyline, discourse) for the application of those rules. You must, in short, figure out not only what specific syntactic formalities are in operation but you must also figure out the nature of the influence of the meaningful contexts in which you find those formalities in operation. Quite a job, right? Don't give up. We've done a big part of the job for you.

Typically, a multiple-choice test item looks something like:

EX: My car was (broken, burst, wrecked) in the accident.

The answer key tells you that 'wrecked' is the proper response, but it doesn't tell you why it is the proper response. What's worse, the item isn't even embedded in a context which might make the answer more apparent. Unfortunately, the student who responds 'broken' is clearly as 'correct' as the student who responds 'wrecked' as the former has simply not assumed the car to be of the size nor in the circumstance usually associated with 'wrecked' but rather with 'broken'. He, and you as his teacher, are victims

of an uncontextualized test item. His response is 'wrong', but you don't know why nor does he.

What is clearly needed is a more complete CONTEXT and a better explanation of some of the rules that generate responses allowed as correct. With the rules at hand you would have a better chance of designing teaching/learning situations based on test results.

The cloze procedure supplies the context, thus resolving a major part of the dilemma. This section of the Guide is designed to give you insight into what we call 'Formal and Contextual Constraints', thus helping to resolve the other part of the dilemma.

Aids to analysis

The following pages comprise two separate tools for use in determining general courses of action in the classroom. The first 'tool' is contained on the next few pages. It is the analysis narrative, a sort of running commentary on a select number of the various forces that constrain response. These narratives are written from both a formal point of view and from a contextual point of view. The information derived by using the narratives is general enough to not contradict your particular teaching strategies, but specific enough to be useful at the tactical level both with individual students and with groups. The narratives don't teach your students. They simply provide you with some insights which will perhaps enhance your ability to create meaningfully language-rich situations in which your students might have an opportunity to acquire useful English. The narratives are DESCRIPTIVE, not PRESCRIPTIVE.

Following the narratives on the very last page of this Guide is a summary sheet, the second 'tool', for use in getting an overall picture of either individual or group performance with respect to formal response

constraints only. It is organized, as you will note, in terms of rather traditional grammatical terms and concepts.

Analysis Narratives

(Note: The number of multiple choices in the test is arbitrarily limited to four. You should be aware that this fact constitutes a constraint on student response. The following narratives are broad and are offered in full knowledge of this fact. It is assumed that in order for a student to select the one correct response from the four offered, he must have considered, overtly or otherwise, the broad constraints described below. Remember, there are some kinds of response influence that you can do something about and some that you can't. The number and nature of the choices provided for each test item (blank space) is one of those things that you have no control over. Clearly, then, you have no control over whatever interaction there might be between the 'constraints' outlined below and the constraints exerted by the number and nature of the multiple choices.)

Item 1: 'laughed'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires an inflected third person singular verb.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The word 'just' in conjunction with the increasing gravity of the responses by don Ramiro over the succeeding years implies that the verb selected ought to reflect an action which is neither violent nor serious.

Item 2: 'water'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank calls for either a noun which would logically conjoin with 'rare flowers' or an adjective which would logically conjoin with 'rare' to modify 'flowers'. An adjective, however, is not among the four choices offered.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The blank must be completed within the size and shape limitations imposed by 'pot full of....'. Obviously a word like 'elephant' or 'him' would violate these limitations.

Item 3: 'them'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires either a noun or pronoun to act as the object of the action 'turn....over to'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The preceding context describes don Ramiro as the subject and 'them' as the object of two actions ('he gave them a long lecture' and 'he threw a pot full of water and rare flowers at them'). The context surrounding this blank similarly sets 'he' as the subject; one therefore assumes 'them' to be the object. The context which immediately follows clearly points to 'them' since it is 'their' misbehavior which is going to result in the intercession of the police.

Item 4: 'man'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a noun, modified by 'Spanish', to be the subject of the action 'took'. The presence of the modifier 'Spanish' makes the use of a pronoun unacceptable.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The action of the fifth year is being described in detail and don Ramiro is the subject of that action. The modifiers 'fine' and 'Spanish' are hints that this is the case. The demonstrative 'this'--which precedes 'fine Spanish'--disallows the selection of a pronominal form. The subsequent sentence again identifies don Ramiro as the subject of the actions being described.

Item 5: 'was'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a form of the copula (or 'linking verb') be. The subjunctive ('were') is sometimes used, though its use is limited and inconsistent. 'Were', however, is not among the four choices offered.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS Action in the surrounding context is being narrated in the past; therefore, to maintain consistency, a past tense form of 'be' is called for. The action in the main part of the sentence ('marched') is described in such a way as to reinforce the 'soldier-like' posture that don Ramiro is assuming, and to implicate the use of the copula as opposed, say, to the verb 'saw'.

Item 6: 'the'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires the use of the definite article before a noun modified by an of-phrase ('streets of ....'). Although other words might be considered acceptable ('some', 'few', 'many'), they are not offered as choices. Even Ø is a conceivable alternative, though it seems low in acceptability.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers only peripheral clues. The major considerations seem to be either sylistic or formal.

Item 7: 'without'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a word which would negate the phrase 'saying a word'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The combination of 'courteously' and 'saying a word' in conjunction with 'listened' requires that either 'not' or 'without', even 'never', be used to complete the thought. There would be, for example, a clear violation inherent in 'listened courteously by saying a word'. Courtesy here implies reverence (or at least tolerance) which is often accompanied by silence. Clearly 'silence' semantically overlaps 'without saying a word'.

Item 8: 'tired'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a word to complete the predicate adjective headed by the copula 'was'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS It is now the evening of the 27th of December and don Ramiro has been marching around like a soldier all day warning the neighborhood youth of his intention to not allow the recurrence of the embarrassment of the previous four years. It's been a long day and his voice is worn out. Naturally, his state is accurately described as 'tired'.

Item 9: 'this'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a noun, a pronoun, or a nominalized verb (such as 'marching').

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers no referent for 'him'; thus, it is in this case an unacceptable choice. Coreference would require the form 'myself' rather than 'me'. The time constraint imposed by 'after four years of' leads one to assume that the blank should be filled with something that has a general reference to the events of the past four years. 'This' fits that description. Subsequent context establishes the relationship between the missing word and don Ramiro's activities of the day which were undertaken to 'frighten', thus 'them' could be acceptable were it offered as a choice.

Item 10: 'don'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires the honorific 'don', a transitional devise such as 'then' or 'and', or Ø.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS Given the punctuation, the only acceptable response is the honorific 'don'. Were it punctuated "....sleep in peace." _____ Ramiro told his wife, "All....", one could then accept either 'then' or 'and'. These usages are inappropriate in the given context since a reader could not process the transition afforded by 'and' or 'then' and then comprehend terminal punctuation (the period after 'wife'). Additionally, this blank represents the sixth time to this point that the honorific title 'don' appears in the text followed by "Ramiro'.

Item 11: 'boys'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS The blank requires a noun or a nominalized verb.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The context provided by the predicate adjective 'frightened' limits the nature of the constituent used to fill the blank. Clearly, the item filling the blank must be capable of sensing fear. Given the fact that don Ramiro has spent the entire day threatening the neighborhood youth, it logically follows that it is the 'boys' who "should now be very frightened".

Item 12: 'loving'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires either an adjective modifying 'wife' or Ø.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS Subsequent context provides the information that don Ramiro's wife was speaking to him 'affectionately'. 'Affectionately' and 'loving' are clearly complementary usages.

Item 13: 'as'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires the completion of the comparative construction 'as....as'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS Don Ramiro's wife is providing as much support for her husband's activities as she possibly can. Her statement compares her husband with everybody else and asserts his superiority. The construction, however, constitutes the use of the comparative to assert the superlative, which is quite a common English-language usage. A source of error, then, could well be a confusion of the superficially expressed comparative ('as....as') and the asserted superlative cued by 'nobody'.

Item 14: 'it's'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires the contracted form, it + is: it's.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context is clearly an expression of time. For time expressions, English uses 'it + be + time', usually contracted to 'it's' in the present and sometimes even " 'twas" in the past and either " 'twill be" or "It'll be" in the future.

Item 15: 'he'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a pronoun to act as the subject of 'got ready'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The pronoun selected for this blank has 'don Ramiro' as its referent. This constraint allows only the selection of the form 'he'.

Item 16: 'Then'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires either Ø or a stylistic transition such as 'But', 'Then', or even 'And'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The preceding context has switched from dialog to narration, and the immediately subsequent context continues the narration. The sentence containing this blank stands perfectly well by itself without filling in the blank. The word 'Then' provides a sense of continuity to the narration.

Item 17: 'loud'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires either Ø, an animate noun (such as 'person') to act as the subject of the action 'pounding', or an adjective which would modify 'pounding'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers only peripheral clues. The major considerations appear to be formal, with the minimal exceptions of the exclamatory punctuation which follows (Rap!...)

Item 18: 'window'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a noun, modified by 'bedroom', to act as the object of the action 'threw open'. Alternatively, if one could accept 'bedroom' as object of 'threw open', then one could also accept an -ly adverb such as 'quickly' or even conceivably 'fast'. Ø is also an acceptable alternative in that hypothetical context. However, the context, in fact, disallows this.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS That don Ramiro opens his bedroom window to ascertain the source of the pounding is an important phase of the narrative. He goes to bed, apparently falls asleep (the time moves from 9:00 to midnight within the span of one sentence), is awakened by a knock at his door, looks out, sees a person, etc. 'Light of the moon' suggests an outdoors background and 'in front of his house' confirms that suggestion. Thus he can't throw open an interior bedroom 'door'-though an exterior door is now possible. Since 'door' is not a choice offered, 'window' is the only acceptable choice of the four available. (See item 20 for further constraints)

Item 19: 'dressed'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a word which would complete the adjective phrase '_____ as a soldier'. An adjectival form describing a trait typical of a soldier is required. 'Straight', 'mean', 'rigid' are words which might fit; 'dressed' is the choice offered.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS Subsequent context establishes that don Ramiro is convinced that he is speaking with a military courier ("...Captain, but certainly no less than a Sergeant."). The way the visitor is dressed, his steed, and his tone of voice are the clues apparent in the text that don Ramiro relies on to become convinced of such. The military dress of the visitor is established in this sequence.

Item 20: 'of'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS The prepositional form 'in front...' must be completed using 'of'; 'in' might conceivably be formally acceptable, though the context described below clearly disallows that choice.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The narrative has established that the visitor is probably waiting outdoors, though the phrase 'by the light of the moon' could refer to light coming into the house through an opening. Subsequent context which establishes that the young man is standing beside a horse diminishes the possibility of an interior scene. Finally, that don Ramiro eventually runs down the stairs and opens the door fairly clinches the fact that don Ramiro is indoors and his visitor is outside. Contextually, then, 'in' is an inappropriate choice. That leaves only 'of' as the possible choice of the four offered. (See item 18 for preceding constraints.)

Item 21: 'man'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS A noun is required which, modified by 'young', completes the adverbial 'next to....'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The presence of a 'young man' represents a central development of the preceding context in which don Ramiro saw a 'young man' waiting by the light of the moon. The narration continues in the present sequence to establish that the 'young man' is standing next to a horse. Subsequent context will have the 'young man' speaking to don Ramiro. The existence of a 'young man' is clearly essential to the development of the episode.

Item 22: 'young'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires an adjective which would modify 'man'; alternately, Ø would seem to be appropriate also.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS At this point in the narrative, it has been made clear that a man, who looks like a soldier, has arrived late at night at don Ramiro's home. He has been twice referred to as a 'young man'. The context, then, repeatedly establishes that the person who is addressing don Ramiro is a man, and further is a soldier-like man, and further is a young man. Though the choices for this blank include three formally correct alternatives, 'young' is contextually the most appropriate response.

Item 23: 'be'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires the verb form 'be' to complete the structure: modal + be + verb stem +-ing.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers only peripheral clues. The major consideration appears to be formal.

Item 24: 'A'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires an article (a, the) or a demonstrative such as 'one', 'some', or 'that'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS Subsequent context establishes that the speaker is simply affirming a bit of knowledge that he has concerning don Ramiro's supposedly illustrious family. No immediate referent could be shown to justify the use of 'that', for example, nor is mention made of multiple illustrious relatives which might place the use of 'one' in understandable context. In short, the surrounding context promotes the use of the article 'a', and this is the only determiner offered as a choice.

Item 25: 'that'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS Carrying the force of the affirmative tag, "Right?", this construction requires either 'this' or 'that' to fill the blank.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers only peripheral clues. The major considerations appear to be either stylistic or formal.

Item 26: 'for'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a preposition which would serve to relate 'letter' to 'you'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The narration to this point has established the late-night arrival of a young man, military in appearance, who apparently knows of don Ramiro's allegedly important political connections. The fact of this man's presence is established; the question of his mission is yet to be addressed. In the present sequence, it is discovered that the mission involves a letter. The blank must be filled with a preposition which designates the relationship between don Ramiro and the letter. A logical implication is that the letter is for (not from, not on) don Ramiro. Subsequent context clearly confirms this.

Item 27: 'letter'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a coreferent to 'letter'. Such words as 'message', 'one', 'thing' and 'letter' would be acceptable. 'Letter' is the only acceptable choice of the four offered.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The present sequence serves to emphasize the mission of the young soldier-like man. He has arrived to deliver a letter, a very important letter. As was previously mentioned, subsequent context clearly establishes the centrality of the letter to the development of the episode.

Item 28: 'a'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires either 'a' or 'one' to modify 'minute'. 'A' is the preferred alternative as it is the less specific of the two and is the more frequently used in the expression 'wait....minute'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers only peripheral clues. The major considerations would appear to be formal.

Item 29: 'put'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a word which describes the action for which 'don Ramiro' is the subject and 'gun' is the object.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The major constraints on selection for this blank are that the action described must be one that (1) a man is capable of accomplishing and of which (2) a gun is capable of being the action object. Additionally, the action, so described, must not conflict with the prepositional phrase 'on the bed' which immediately follows. 'Took', for example, doesn't violate the major constraints but does violate the additional one.

Item 30: 'quickly'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires either an adverb or Ø.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The context which precedes establishes the late-night appearance of a well-mannered, business-like young man with a mission. The subsequent context finds don Ramiro running down the stairs 'as quick as a flash'. The adverb which fills this blank must be one which denotes purposeful though rapid action. 'Slowly', for example, would clearly violate the urgency being built into the situation.

Item 31: 'quick'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS The idiomatic expression 'as quick as a flash' must be appropriately completed.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS This sequence emphasizes the urgency of the moment which don Ramiro is feeling and which later makes him 'barely able to control himself'. Following on the immediately preceding context, 'as quick as a flash' is most appropriate.

Item 32: 'the'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires an article (a, the) or a quantifier such as 'some', 'many', or conceivably an adjective such as 'steep' or 'slippery', or even Ø.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers only peripheral clues. The major considerations appear to be formal.

Item 33: 'at'

FORMAL CONSTRAINTS This blank requires a preposition to head the temporal modifier '_____this late hour'.

IMMEDIATE CONTEXTUAL CONSTRAINTS The surrounding context offers only peripheral clues. The major constraints appear to be formal.

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TODAY'S DATE_____

ANALYSIS SUMMARY
for FORMAL CONSTRAINTS

STUDENT'S NAME_____

Category:	Total Possible	Total Correct
NOUNS/PRONOUNS		
Items: 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 15, 18, 21, 25, 27	10	
ADJECTIVES/ADVERBS		
Items: 8, 12, 17, 19, 22, 30	6	
VERBS		
Items: 1, 5, 14, 23, 29	5	
ARTICLES		
Items: 6, 24, 28, 32	4	
PREPOSITIONS		
Items: 20, 26, 33	3	
OTHER		
Comparative - Items: 13, 31	2	
Negation - Item: 7	1	
Honorific - Item: 10	1	
Transition - Item: 16	1	
TOTALS:	33	

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P O O R S I M P L E T O N[1]

TOTAL SCORE:

NAME_____
(Nombre)

TODAY'S DATE_____ GRADE IN SCHOOL_____
(Fecha de hoy) (Grado)

BIRTHDATE_____ SEX: M_____ F_____
(Fecha de nacimiento) (Sexo)

PLACE OF BIRTH_____
(Lugar de nacimiento)

YOUR SCHOOL'S NAME_____ TEACHER_____
(Nombre de la escuela) (Maestra o maestro)

Testing and Evaluation for Bilinguals
A TITLE III ESEA PROJECT
Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit
1110 Enterprise Road
East Petersburg, PA 17520
(717) 569-7331

MC FORMAT - APRIL, 1976

[1]Translated from the original "Pobre Inocente", Leyendas Latinoamericanas, edited by Genevieve Barlow (Skokie, Illinois: National Textbook Company, 1970), pp. 6-12, with permission of the publisher.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS EXERCISE

On the following pages you'll find a story about a tradition which is common in America. Among English-speaking people in North America, this tradition is called 'April Fools Day' and it takes place each year on the 1st of April. Among many Spanish-speaking people in both North and South America this tradition is known as 'El Día de los Inocentes'. It takes place each year on the 28th of December.

As you read this story, you'll notice that some of the words have been left out. That's what turns the story into an exercise. Your job will be to put the right words back into the story. To make that job easier, you'll find that for each space where a word was omitted, there is a list of four words from which you can choose. When you've chosen the word that fits best in the blank, just mark an 'X' through it. For example, if words had been left out of the first part of the story, it would look like this:

Nearly three centuries ago, _____ Spaniard of good charac-	---- a four me of
26 ter named don Ramiro lived with his wife in the royal and very noble	
Columbian _____ of Tunja.	bed city lived the

Take a minute now to guess which of these words belong in the story. When you think you've guessed the right words, mark them with an 'X' . When you're through, your teacher will read the right words to you so that you can see if you guessed correctly.

Now you can start on the story that begins on page 1. If you come to a spot where you can't guess the right word, just go on and come back to it later. It will help you to read the whole story, blanks and all, at least once before you start selecting words for the blanks.

INSTRUCCIONES PARA COMPLETAR ESTE EJERCICIO

En las siguientes páginas encontrará una historia acerca de una tradición la cual es muy común en América. Entre las personas de habla inglés en Norteamérica, esta tradición se llama 'April Fools Day' y se celebra todos los años el primero de abril. Entre las muchas personas de habla hispana en el Norte y el Sur de América, esta tradición se denomina 'El Día de los Inocentes'. Todos los años se celebra este día el 28 de diciembre.

Mientras que usted lea esta historia, podrá darse cuenta de que algunas palabras han sido omitidas. Esto es lo que convierte esta historia en un ejercicio. Su tarea será colocar las palabras correctas en la historia. Para facilitarle la tarea, encontrará que por cada palabra omitida habrá una lista de 4 palabras de las cuales usted podrá seleccionar. Cuando usted haya seleccionado la palabra que corresponde al blanco, haga una 'X' através de ella. Por ejemplo, si se hubieran omitido palabras en la primera parte de la historia, aparecería así:

Nearly three centuries ago, _____ Spaniard of good charac-	---- a four me of
ter named don Ramiro lived with his wife in the royal and very noble	
Columbian _____ of Tunja.	bed city lived the

29

Tome un minuto y adivine cuales de estas palabras pertenecen en la historia. Cuando usted haya adivinado la palabra correcta, márquela con una 'X'. Cuando termine, su maestra se encargará de leerle la palabra correcta para que usted pueda ver si adivinó correctamente.

Ahora, puede comenzar a leer la historia que empieza en la página número 1. Si se encuentra en un punto en que no puede adivinar la palabra correcta, continúe y luego regrese a ese punto después. Será de gran ayuda leer la historia completa, con los blancos, antes de comenzar a seleccionar las palabras que corresponden a los blancos.

28

Nearly three centuries ago, a Spaniard of good character named don Ramiro lived with his wife in the royal and very noble Columbian city of Tunja. This gentleman was a stern man, a very stern man. He was also a proud man. According to him, he belonged to one of the most noble and distinguished families of Spain. In addition, he spoke in vague terms of a relative of his who was the Viceroy of New Granada, a very old Columbian name.

Being as stern and proud as he was, don Ramiro was always the target of practical jokes on the 28th of December. For four years, at 12:05 the morning of the 28th, mischievous boys in his neighborhood had made it a practice to pound loudly on his door. Then when don

30 Ramiro opened his bedroom window, the laughing boys would yell:

"SIMPLETON!"

The first year that they played this joke on him, don Ramiro just _____(1); the second year, he gave them a long lecture about courtesy; the third year he threw a pot full of _____(2) and rare flowers at them; and the fourth year he threatened to turn _____(3)

31

1 ---- laugh laughed quiet was

2 ---- him the then water

3 ---- go him the them

WHEN YOU FINISH THIS PAGE GO RIGHT ON TO THE NEXT PAGE
(Cuando termine esta página pase a la siguiente)

over to the police for their misbehavior.

The fifth year, don Ramiro decided to put an end to the foolishness once and for all. The morning of the 27th of December, this fine Spanish _____ took a huge gun from its cabinet. Carrying it
4

as though he _____ a soldier, don Ramiro marched through _____
5 6

streets of his neighborhood. To all the boys he came across, he said:

"Tomorrow I'm going to shoot this gun at anyone who comes to my door."

32 The boys, who were good but just a little mischievous, listened to him courteously _____ saying a word.
7

The evening of the 27th of December, don Ramiro was _____
8

and his voice was hoarse from telling everyone about the gun.

"Tonight, after four years of putting up with _____, I'm
9

4 ---- and he man to

5 ---- said shoot this was

6 ---- and for the to

7 ---- and he to without

8 ---- always said saying tired

33

9 ---- him me the this

WHEN YOU FINISH THIS PAGE GO RIGHT ON TO THE NEXT PAGE
(Cuando termine esta página pase a la siguiente)

going to sleep in peace," _____ (10) Ramiro told his wife. "All the _____ (11) should now be very frightened."

His _____ (12) wife smiled. "Nobody is as smart _____ (13) my husband," she said affectionately.

"Thank you, light of my life. Even if _____ (14) only nine o'clock by the cathedral clock, I'm going right to bed."

And don Ramiro went to the bedroom where _____ (15) got ready for a peaceful night. _____ (16) around midnight, don Ramiro heard a _____ (17) pounding at his door: Rap! Rap! Rap!

34

Jumping from his bed, he grabbed his gun and threw open his bedroom _____ (18). By the light of the moon, don Ramiro could see a young man _____ (19) as a soldier waiting in front _____ (20) his house. Next to the young _____ (21) was a magnificent white horse.

10 --- and don said then

11 --- boys he sound time

12 --- a loving my woman

13 --- and as is like

14 --- is it's the you

15 --- he I'm the was

16 --- All In The Then

17 --- knock loud noise somebody

18 --- fast he open window

19 --- dress dressed he like

20 --- door in of the

21 --- he I man there

35

WHEN YOU FINISH THIS PAGE GO RIGHT ON TO THE NEXT PAGE
(Cuando termine esta página pase a la siguiente)

"Am I speaking with the distinguished don Ramiro Quesada Vásquez de la Vega?" asked the _____ man in a very courteous, yet
22

authoritative tone of voice.

"Yes, indeed you are," replied don Ramiro, thinking he must _____ speaking with at least a Captain, but certainly no less than
23

a Sergeant.

"_____ relative of yours has the distinguished position
24

of Viceroy of New Granada, isn't _____ so?"
25

Don Ramiro was taken by surprise.

36

"Well . . . well . . . ," he muttered, not knowing whether to tell the truth or not.

"Very well, sir, here is a letter _____ you; without a
26

doubt a very important _____ at that."
27

22 --- non old soldier young

23 --- be go the was

24 --- A I To Your

25 --- he that the you

26 --- for from of on

27 --- all is letter look

37

WHEN YOU FINISH THIS PAGE GO RIGHT ON TO THE NEXT PAGE
(Cuando termine esta página pase a la siguiente)

"OK, OK, wait just _____ minute, please." Saying this, don Ramiro _____ his gun on the bed and _____ changed from his nightshirt to an outfit more suitable for the occasion. As _____ as a flash, he ran down _____ stairs and opened the door.

"Your letter, sir. Please excuse the inconvenience _____ this late hour."

Without awaiting a reply, the young man snapped a military salute, ran to his horse, jumped on, and in the wink of an eye disappeared into the shadows of the night.

"Who do you suppose wrote me this letter?" thought don Ramiro. "What a huge envelope and what elegant printing! It might even be from the lawyer in Spain telling me that I've inherited my aunt's fortune!"

Barely able to control himself, he tore open the envelope, pulled out the letter, a very brief letter, and read these words:

"POOR SIMPLETON!"

* * * *

28 --- a to two wait

29 --- and let put took

30 --- put quickly the went

31 --- as he quick the

32 --- and for the to

33 --- at but for to

38